

About Tashi Lhunpo Monastery

Tashi Lhunpo Monastery is seat to the Panchen Lama, the second most important spiritual leader of Tibet. In 1447 the Monastery was founded by His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, Gyalwa Gendun Drup, in Shigatse, Tibet's second largest city. It is one of the four great monasteries of Central Tibet and was supervised and looked after by the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas. It has the glory of producing thousands of renowned scholars in the field of Mahayana Buddhist Philosophy as per ancient Indian Buddhist Universities such as Nalanda and Vikramalashila.

During the lifetime of the 4th Panchen Lama, Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen, there were more than 3,000 monks in the Monastery and by 1959 there were 5,000, with another 2,000 monks affiliated to the Monastery living outside Tibet. The Communist Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959 and the Cultural Revolution from 1966-80 both wreaked destruction on Tibet's monastic institutions, which lost many precious scriptures, statues and images. Many monks were killed or imprisoned and only 250 were able to follow the Dalai Lama into exile.

In 1972, under the patronage of His Holiness of the 14th Dalai Lama, Tashi Lhunpo Monastery was re-established in the Southern Indian state of Karnataka. The Monastery has monks coming from Tibet and the Himalayan regions of Spithi, Khunu, Ladakh and Arunachal. Occupying a central position in the Tibetan settlement of Bylakuppe, there are close to 400 monks including many Tulkus (reincarnate lamas) studying and performing various religious practices.

Many monks escaped Tibet because of difficulties (imprisonment or death) they face trying to practice Buddhism inside Tibet. Tashi Lhunpo Monastery is one of the poorest of the re-established monasteries.

The 10th Panchen Lama (Lobsang Lhundup Choekyi Gyaltsen) did not leave Tibet and consequently many of the senior lamas from Tashi Lhunpo Monastery remained inside Tibet. The 10th Panchen Lama stayed on in Tibet in order to help the Tibetans in Tibet during this dark period in Tibet's history.

Tashi Lhunpo Monastery is a non-profit charitable organization which imparts various aspects of the Buddhist religion while maintaining a school of modern education. In recent years it has matured into a reputable full-fledged monastery, performing a vital

role in the preservation of Buddhism. One aspect of a monastery is the parental-like responsibility of looking after the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of all the monks, throughout their lives. The modern school is at the budding stage and faces enormous daily hurdles. Yet, there is faith in divine help as the school moves along.

Tashi Lhunpo Monastery seeks to provide the best possible modern education, along with a deep and intimate understanding of the heritage of Tibet. We aim to become a contributing member in spreading the virtues of honesty, compassion and sacrifice, as taught by Lord Buddha. But, we are somehow lacking from a financial point of view. So, we appeal for your help anyway you can.